

Poems

by  
Owen Innsly,  
and others

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Part I.

The Poems of  
Owen Innsly



## DEDICATION

Moves thou perchance in strange and starry spheres,  
afar beyond the impenetrable night that shrouds the  
tomb, smiling at the old fears of death, encircled by  
all-conquering light?

Or does thou sleep where thy last bed was made,  
beneath the violets and the scented grass, careless  
alike of sunshine and of shade, of morns that  
linger and of eves that pass?

Ah, who shall say? No eye can pierce the dark,  
no strained ear tidings catch of weal or woe out  
of silence, and no single spark illumines that portal  
through which all must go.

Yet this we know. Death is a kind of birth and brings  
one sacred immortality. Thou lives in thy traces left  
on earth, thou lives in thy children's memory.

And one of these, binding the varied flowers with  
tinted petals and with shining leaves, fallen on his  
path in sad and happy hours,

as one might bind the ripened corn in sheaves.  
Dear blossoms of the heart and brain such sprays  
and blooms as wither not, but nod and wave forever.  
The completed garland lays with loving hands  
upon thy quiet grave.

## WAITING

I count the days, the lonely days,  
the weary days. From east to west they softly  
go, silent and slow.

Green is the earth  
with budding grass, the wondrous birth  
of spring and hope, wide  
as it spreads new glory sheds.

The air is sweet. Here snowy petals  
strew the street, here lean against the  
garden-wall the lilacs tall.

The cuckoo cries  
and in his frequent note there lies  
the count of years where  
brain and nerve must toil and serve.

But youth is strong, and unappalled  
it fronts the long array of days which  
must be fair if thou art there.

When I may learn  
my will to thine to bend and turn, to meet  
thy mood and more and more love and adore.

The world is dear and  
good. I dare not shed a tear.  
I sing my songs of love and praise,  
and count the days.

## AN EVENING RIDE

We ride and ride. High on the hills  
the fir-trees stretch into the sky. The  
birches which the deep calm stills, quiver  
again as we speed by.

Beside the road a shallow stream  
goes leaping over its rocky bed. Here  
lies the corn-fields with a gleam  
of daisies white and poppies red.

A faint star trembles in the west.  
A fire-fly sparkles, fluttering bright against  
the mountain's sombre breast,  
and yonder shines a village light.

Oh could I creep into thine arms  
beloved and upon thy face read the  
arrest of dire alarms that press me close  
and from thy embrace we view  
the sweet earth as we ride.

Alas, how vain our longings are!  
Already night is spreading wide  
her sable wing, and thou art fair.

## A ROSARY

Like pearls that form a rosary, so lie  
in shining rows for me strung on a golden  
thread of time,

the precious hours I know with thee.

And filled with love and praise  
of thee, as one who tells his rosary,

I count upon the beads of time  
the benisons thou brings me.

Oh may such hours still  
dawn for me! So rich in love, so filled with  
thee, and glisten on the robe of time  
a never-ending rosary.

## SHADOWS

She leaned from out the mystic space of  
Shadow-Land. As on the wall the shapes the firelight  
casts, her face flickered and faded. That was all.

Like phantoms starting on the wold, when dusk  
defeats the clear-eyed day, her form rose, but when arms  
would hold and clasp it vanished quite away.

Now we are shadows both. Above the grave  
of hoped-for future bliss two pale wraiths stand.

Oh sister, love! Reach me thy lips.  
Can shadows kiss?



## DEPARTURE

The hours go on. Up from the  
leaden-coloured sea the autumn wind sweeps  
chillingly, and she is gone.

Like tears that drain  
the heart until its springs are dry,  
so drains the sources of the sky  
the falling rain.

The white ships sail like ghosts  
toward some mysterious tryst hastening,  
and vanish in the mist,  
silent and pale. From clasping hands  
and clinging lips, from love and  
care of dear ones left, they dear ones  
bear to unknown lands.

The circling shore lies lonely.  
The receding wave moans like that whisper  
from the grave heard evermore  
by widowed hearts.

“Unfettered by the  
bonds of years, and deaf to prayer,  
untouched by tears, each one departs.”

Oh love, oh grief! Your mingled  
notes I singing wake, with trust that song  
for her dear sake may bring relief.

## IMPATIENCE

I see the ships go sailing, sailing.  
My feet are fettered to the shore.  
Their prows with many a voyage are hoar.  
See on the far horizon paling  
they sink and are no more.

I see the birds go flying, flying,  
in swaying line and whirling ring,  
'twixt blue and blue their way they wing.  
But those swift flocks through ether  
plying to me no message brings.

I see the moon go riding  
through the heavenly paths on golden  
wheels, her passing kiss the ocean  
feels, but in his bosom  
swiftly hiding his joy,  
no word reveals.

Oh golden moon and snowy pinions  
of birds that fly and ships that mate  
their speed with birds, in royal state sweep proudly  
through your wide dominions! And I, I only wait.

## THINE EYES

In other days beloved, when the world  
has stepped between us and thou seems far off,  
when half effaced my memory by mists of  
sweeter incense round thee curled than I can offer,

when like dead leaves whirled before a storm  
my glad dreams break and flee, before relentless fate's  
reality, when youth and joy their golden wings have furled.

Even then oh love I shall not quite despair. Even  
then upon my sore and weary heart a gentle after-sunset  
glow will rise and comfort me. Some moments will be  
fair, and looking back I still shall smile once more,  
remembering the old kindness of thine eyes.

## WHO PROFITS?

Wherefore the vigils and the tears,  
the flight of dreams when night appears,  
the short repose, the long unrest,  
the wearied throbbings of the breast,  
the utter impotence of will, the shifting  
of the pillow till a dull beam strikes  
the window-pane and daylight  
struggles in again?

Were it indeed for her dear sake  
if she might slumber while I wake, if for  
my tossings to and fro, her limbs  
profounder rest might know, but sleep,  
because it shuns my eyes  
on hers no whit the gentler lies  
and all the tears that  
I can shed bring no new blessing to her bed.

Oh love how overbold art thou!  
I am thy slave. My heart I bow. But one  
grace I demand of thee, torture not unavailingly.  
Let mercy guide,  
do not keep chained in thy toils  
the swift-winged sleep. Give me, too ceaselessly  
oppressed, a little while, a little rest.

## THE BETTER PART

Because in love, *my love*, there  
are two parts to choose, the near, the far,  
the humble moth, the glittering star.

Since one is vassal, one is lord, one  
the adorer, one the adored, one speaks,  
and one obeys the word.

Since one must watch and ever  
keep a faithful guard that one may sleep,  
since one must sow, and one  
must reap. Since one must  
wear, and one adorn, one pluck the rose  
and one the thorn, one know  
the night, and one the morn.

Since one must give, and one  
must take, one yield his heart for one to  
break, content even thus for love's dear sake.

I, dearest, choose the better part.  
I choose the sorrow and the smart, the full  
surrender of the heart. I choose  
the better part today, forever,  
which no fate can sway,  
and nought but death can take away.

## COMPENSATION

Since heaven has given me  
to wear the crown of love august and  
fair, is it not fitting that I should bear  
its cross as well, without despair?

Since I may sow the precious  
seed and cull its flowers to fill my need,  
is it a fatal thing indeed if from their  
thorns my hands must bleed?

Since I may drink the draught  
divine down to the dregs, if sometimes  
brine be mingled with the glowing wine,  
shall I shall murmur or repine?

Oh thou who whatsoever thou art,  
thou great and universal heart, *thou soul  
of love* since pain and smart form  
of thy perfect whole a part,  
my destined portion let me take,

while at thy boundless streams  
I slake my thirst and gather strength  
to make a joy of sorrows, for love's sake.

## LAURELS

I would cull laurels,  
but not for pride or fame.  
When grave shades fall on him  
    that lies low, all honour  
shrivels to an empty name.  
Alike are praise and blame,  
    sunshine and snow.

But I would pluck  
the rarest flowers that spring  
from mortal effort, gems  
    that deepest sleep  
in human possibility to fling low  
at thy feet the  
gorgeous glittering heap,

that endless splendours  
might thy name surround,  
that men beholding  
    thine imperial mien.

And the rich jewels  
wherewith thou were crowned  
might cry with awed rapt voice,  
    "Behold thy queen!" That  
thou so greeted might grow  
proud the while, and know love's  
    work and bless me with a smile.

## LIGHTHOUSES

When pales the sunset  
flush along the sky, when the sea's  
azure deepens into gray,  
the lighthouse lamps flash out  
                    across the bay,  
their cheerful beams proclaiming

“This way lie perils,  
and that way safety. You who roam,  
searching for foreign shores  
    with caution steer and you  
returning, *lo*, the land is near  
    and yonder waits the harbor  
                    which is home.”

Such is thy part.  
Thou art my beacon-light  
standing the open passage  
    to disclose, against unsafe  
and treacherous ways to warn.

Never did a dark  
and stormy night obscure my  
path but that bright flame arose  
    and shone with steadfast  
                    radiance till the morn.



## HELENA'S SONG

Between the olives and the pines  
the vineyards slope to meet the shore.  
The sun in skies unsullied shines  
till evening lends a charm for more.

The fragrant breath  
of orange-flowers perfumes  
the sleepy summer air, and  
all the slow-revolving hours a garb  
of pomp and beauty wear.

What were it all oh love my  
love! But that with thee its joy I know?  
Thou art my dazzling heaven above,  
and thou my fertile field below.

Thou art my wave-encircled  
land and thou alone my central sea.  
My spirit leaps at thy command  
to drown, and lose itself in thee.

## BURNT SHIPS

Upon the hopeless desert  
of her love I landed, lured by  
glamours on her face. And,  
scarce on shore, a desolate  
strange place I said, but

surely some green cedar  
grove awaits me, proffering  
its cooling shade, and in its depths  
melodious fountains spring.

So tear the canvas from  
the masts and bring planks,  
beams and spars until the pile is laid.  
Then with my mad hands

I lit the fire, and watched with  
fevered eyes the dark mass burn,  
so blotting out the prospect of return.

But daily cools the pulse of my  
desire and bitter is the redness of her lips.  
Oh god of love why did I burn my ships!?

## GIFTS OF THE GODS

The gods bestow on men wisdom  
and art to stir with noble counsel  
and brave deed the flagging pulses  
                    of a fellow-heart,  
and minister to need.

To pierce the subtle secrets  
of the globe, to read the records of lands  
and seas and stars that seam  
                    the midnight's sable  
robe, great nature's mysteries.

And that all love the breasts  
of all may reach and into new exalted  
regions lift, they spend the power  
                    of soul-compelling  
speech, and song's diviner gift.

From me they veiled their higher  
knowledge, hid the paths of light  
and calm that lie above the common round.  
                    My feeble lisping chid,  
but taught me how to love.

## BEYOND DEATH

Suppose the dreaded messenger  
of death should hasten steps  
    that seem though sure so slow,  
    and soon should whisper with his  
chilly breath, "Arise, thine hour  
                    has sounded, thou  
    must go, for they that earliest  
taste life's holiest feast must early  
    fast, lest grown too bold, they  
dare seize the share of them that follow."

Then though my pulse's beat  
forever ceased, if where I slumbered  
thou should chance to pass,  
    though grave-bound I thy  
    presence should discern.  
Heedless of coffin-lid  
and tangled grass, upward to kiss thy feet  
my lips would yearn. And did  
    one spark of love thy heart  
    inflare, with the old rapture  
        I should call thy name.

## MORTALITY

If thou should die beloved,  
(fatal thought that curdles all the  
blood along my veins,) and with  
foul poisonous vapour stains  
thy glad day's beauty,

though with anguish fraught  
our parting, I would be near, so  
that nought might miss me  
of the swift and torturing  
pains such loss would nourish.  
For my soul disdains  
a peace of ignorance  
or oblivion bought.

And, my love, I would  
not be first to go lest thy dear eyes  
might drop a single tear,  
remembering one who  
worshiped them so well,  
or lest some sudden pang  
thy breast might know, when  
half forgetting thou  
should chance to hear  
some careless voice  
my name and story tell.

## JEWELS

Kings have a royal custom that I love.  
In common times bringing the priceless gems  
that on high days crown their diadems,  
each stone setting the name above,  
as this is such a pearl, a diamonds this.

They spread them where the general  
eye may see and grow to brilliance in their  
brilliancy. I too have jewels, jewels of  
pure bliss brighter than pearls and  
diamonds and more rare, of song, speech

and silence, presence and absence.  
Turn which way you will their deathless  
splendours burn. So by my mood men  
guess which one I wear and in my  
gladness see the others shine, for I am  
faint with joy to know them mine.

## LOVE'S CUSTOM

In years to come I ask thee not to say  
"I loved him once. Once I held him dear."  
Ah no, long since I put that hope away  
and buried it in smiles without a tear!

But say "'Mid all who worshiped  
at my feet exalting me, 'mid all who loved  
me best as I remember now, I there beat  
no heart more fondly in a single breast,  
no eyes that brightened quicker when

I came, no hand that lay more longingly  
in mine, no voice that knew a tenderer tone  
to name my name than his whose love  
seemed half divine."

If this thou say, though I be dead the while,  
your words will reach me, I shall hear and smile.

## ONE WAY OF LOVE

To love thee sweet is as if one should love  
a marble statue of perfected form, which on the spot  
that hot lips lie above, a tiny spot grows  
for an instant warm. The moment passed,

straightway it is cold again, returning to its  
first proud lifeless grace, keeping no memory of  
that close embrace, nor from the warm  
red lips one scarlet stain.

But what of that? Why should I be  
distressed though thou art cold as stone? Let  
me be brave if but for once and love  
for nothing save  
love's sake only.

For he loves best and brightest does  
his flame of passion burn, who gives all things,  
asking no return.



## MY QUEEN

He has been queen too long  
whom I adore. Mistress of men and  
moulder of their will. For

homage such as mine to reach  
the core of her proud heart, or teach  
it one new thrill.

Yet I have heard that royal  
rulers know such greed for power,  
that for some strip of land,  
some province stored with  
vineyards or long rows of waving corn  
and grain they throw  
like rubbish honour,  
wealth and fame, and as were  
water spill the blood of men.

If this be so, to increase thy sway  
by one poor heart's extent thou 'rt fain.  
Oh then stretch out thy hand to me,  
and with a mien of graciousness  
look on me, oh my queen!

## DEPENDENCE

What would life keep for me  
if thou should go?

Beloved give me answer,  
for my art is pledged unto  
thy service and my heart  
apart from thee joy  
nor grace can know.

No arid desert, no wide  
waste of snow looks  
drearier to exiled ones  
who start on their forced  
journey, than should thou  
depart this fair green earth  
to my dead hope would show.

And like a drowning man  
who struggling clings with  
stiffened fingers  
to the rope that saves  
thrown out to meet his deep need  
from the land, so to thy  
thought I hold when sorrow's  
wings darken the sky  
and 'mid the bitterest waves of fate  
am succored by thy friendly hand.

## SUBMISSION

God forbid that I should complain  
however hard and heavy be the cross  
thou bid me carry, since to me all loss  
    incurred turns straightway to gain,  
and by this side of thine inflicted pain  
all pleasure won from others  
    is dross beside pure gold.

Like summer winds tossing  
the branches of trees whose trunks  
remain unmoved, so sweep the floods  
    of circumstance ruffling along  
the current of my mood while my  
soul's deep repose they cannot shake.

But at a word of thine before thy  
glance my spirit bows, knowing thy will  
is good, eager to do or suffer for thy sake.

## LOVE'S CALENDAR

I take no heed of month  
or week or day, or times and seasons  
of the year. Springtime is with me  
when she is near, and winter  
    when clouds of absence stray  
    across my heaven, holding  
        its sun at bay.

The morning dawns when  
her dear eyes appear, and night shuts  
down upon me blank and drear,  
when those consoling  
    orbs are taken away.

As earth is gladdened  
when the snows depart, when  
woods and meadows are  
no longer bare, but tender blossoms  
    nestle in the grass, so  
    when my love approaches  
to my heart her balmy breath brings  
floods of summer air, and fresh flowers  
    spring wherever her footsteps pass.

## ISLANDS

“Some unsuspected isle  
in far-off seas.” Browning.

Beyond the seacoast where the  
level sea stretches its shining length  
some isle must rest, cradled  
upon the ocean’s bounteous  
    breast where men might live  
    untrammelled, glad and free.

Out of life’s babbling current  
there must be some unsuspected  
isle, love’s dear bequest  
to those who follow him, where  
    safe and blest, Oh my beloved,  
        I might dwell with thee.

But ships are not found  
strong enough to bear  
adventurers over every ocean’s  
    foam. Not all my thought  
nor love and care can build  
the bark in which we two might  
roam. So still my voice assails  
    the unheeding air, with vain  
    lamentings for that island home.

## SNOW-DROPS

Already once I've brought  
you snow-drops dear, from an old  
garden whose forgotten grace  
    seemed to revive again a little  
    space to do you honour.

Though March winds blow  
drear and chill, yet with sweet  
sense that spring is near these  
    brave and hardy buds the snow  
    displace, showing each

one a white and shining  
face, the earliest flowers  
of the awakening year.

So like the snow-drops once  
for me there grew, amid the  
snows of life pure blossoms,  
    when your smile first rested  
    on me, and I knew  
    my springtime was at hand.  
Today again the flowers  
of spring and love I bring to you, with  
heart unchanged and faithful now as then.

## LOVE'S ABODE

Up the white steps that led  
to love's abode I hastened, tarrying  
by the golden gate.

"Rulers of gods and men," I cried,

"I wait to pay my homage  
here where most its owed!"

Then the bright gate swung  
open and bestowed an entrance,  
as love's servants

in sweet state came out  
to meet and welcome me.

Elated and proud I followed  
the way they showed.

They led me to the temple door,  
where gleamed soft lights, and  
sweet scents floated upon the air.

"Here wait our master's voice,"  
they said, and then, they left me. Oh  
when shall I be called into

the inner sanctuary, where amid  
his chosen ones love reigns supreme?

STORM AND CALM, WHILE  
LISTENING TO ST. SAEN'S

The waves of love will dash me  
on a shore trackless and waste, where  
there is no return. My mast is split,  
my rudder gone, they burn like  
    glowing coals, these icy waves  
    that pour across my shattered deck.

The mad winds tore long since  
my sails in shreds. The black heavens  
yearn to clasp the deep. No star can  
I discern that might direct me  
    till the storm were over. So rose  
    the cry of one in agony, tossed

    on wide floods of passion,  
doubt and dread. Then as a clear  
morn smiles upon the sea when a wild  
night has spread its wings and fled,  
    so thy sweet eyes arose  
    and shone on me, and peace  
    and calm upon my soul were shed.



## SERVING

That thou aren't yet all mine  
why should I care? Why grieve because  
the draught is scant and thin which  
thy love offers for my tasting in  
its fragile cup, at moments short and rare?

Fool should I be thus early to  
despair! The labours of my love but  
now begin. Twice seven long years  
Jacob served to win Rachel,  
and dwell with her long days and fair.

So I will serve for thee from  
land to land, gleaning and gathering  
until twice seven years, and more  
if need be, on their path shall roll,  
with fond assurance that we  
two shall stand at last together,  
'mid the blessed spheres of love's  
domain, united soul to soul.

## THE BURDEN OF LOVE

I bear an unseen burden constantly.  
Waking or sleeping I can never thrust  
the load aside. Through summer's  
    heat and dust and winter's snows  
        it still abides with me.

I cannot let it fall though I should  
be never so weary, for carry it I must.  
Nor can the bands that bind it to me rust  
        or break, I shall never be set free.

Sometimes it is heavy as the weight  
that Atlas bore on giant shoulders;  
sometimes light as the frail message  
of the carrier dove. But light or heavy,  
        it shifts never more. What is it  
        this oppression, day and night?  
The burden, dearest, of a mighty love.

## A SIMILE

At sea, far parted from the  
happy shore the solitary rock  
lies unmoved by caressing waves,  
though unreprieved their constant  
    kisses on its breast they pour.  
So it stands witnessed  
    by all human lore.

Wherever the wanton god  
of love has roved his shafts fell  
never equal; one beloved, one lover  
    there must be for evermore.

Dear, if thou wilt be thou  
that rock at sea, but let me be  
the waves that never leave  
their yearning through the ocean  
    space. And if be thou beloved  
    then let me be the fond  
lover destined to receive and  
hold thee in love's infinite embrace.

## BLOSSOMS OF LOVE

The blossoms of my love  
are many-hued and manifold.  
Some glow like tongues of fire  
    with those hot dyes of  
    passion-fueled desire.  
Some are white as snow and  
heavy-dewed with fallen tears.

With modesty imbued  
some bow their heads. Others  
    purple-robed aspire to  
flaunt before the world their  
proud attire, and some soberer  
    tinted blush in solitude.

All these varied blooms  
I watch, tend and guard with  
constant care, untiringly, that  
    to them new grace and  
beauty may possess. And many  
a busy day and night I spend  
    in weaving of their wealth  
    a crown for thee. Beloved,  
wilt thou wear it? Answer yes.

## DEPRECATION

(Estrella to Alfronso.)

A pallid nun behind the  
iron bars of fate I sit and watch  
the roses blow that are for  
    others with wan smiles.  
And so I hear thy song  
    sweep past me to the stars.

Like haughty conquerors  
in triumphal cars thy mad hopes  
ride within thy breast, and go  
    dauntlessly into realms I do  
    not know. My pale peace thy  
    passion breaks and mars.

Oh friend cease therefore  
thy wild minstrelsy! No responsive  
chord vibrates in my breast,  
    and its dead ashes stir  
    not at thy call. Then for  
    thy love's sake thou loves

me, silence the voice I may  
not answer, lest striving to  
flee from it, I faint and fall.

## NEPENTHE

Unto Telemachus, who sought  
at Menalaus' court tidings of great  
Odysseus, tarrying year on  
year the fair-armed Helen sweet  
    refreshment for him brought,  
        nepenthe, eastern juice.

Such charm it wrought that  
who so tasted it could shed no  
tear a whole day long  
    though all he held most  
        dear were struck with death,  
        he knew and suffered naught.

So thou, a later Helen brings  
me a draught wherein oblivion and repose  
in cunning portions are together  
blent. I drink, my tears are  
    dry, my soul can see no ill, and even  
        sorrow's memory grows forgotten  
            in a nameless, deep content.

## IN PROSPERITY

A wise and famous nation  
held belief whoever in prosperity  
    overgrew the bounds of  
temperate good, him would pursue  
the ever-jealous gods with loss  
    and grief.

Sometimes so golden is  
my harvest's sheaf, my way so  
    flowery, my heaven so blue,  
I tremble lest the immortals brew  
    a storm to prove my fortune's  
    sudden thief.

But thou art my preserver  
even here, and earns my mercy  
    from the envious skies, since  
lacking thee I lack the one thing dear,  
    which were life's only first and  
    fairest prize.  
For other joys are barren all and drear  
beside that one which a stern fate denies.

## IN A LETTER

There came a breath out of a distant  
time, an odour from neglected gardens where  
unnumbered roses once perfumed the air through  
summer days, in childhood's happy clime.

There came the salt scent of the sea,  
the chime of waves against the beaches or the  
bare, gaunt rocks, as to the mind half unaware  
recur the words of some familiar rhyme.

And as above the gardens and the sea  
the moon arises, and her silver light touches  
the landscape with a deeper grace, so  
over the misty wraiths of memory,  
turning them into pictures clear and  
bright, rose in a halo the beloved face.



## TITLES

Sovereigns have no names but those  
bestowed in baptism, Constance and Phillip,  
so each age knows them and deals  
of praise or blame their wage as harvests  
of good fame or ill they sowed.

So with the mighty over whose cradle  
glowed the star of genius, with that heritage  
Dante and Raphael shine on history's  
page simple as when they walked  
our common road.

Like thy great namesake, in whose  
cause the plain of Troy was strewn with  
corpses while above Olympus heard the  
wrathful gods contend, so 'mid the homage  
of respect and love laid at thy feet by lover  
and by friend, Helen thou art,  
and Helen must remain.

## AFTER ABSENCE

After long years of absence  
had gone by he stood again upon the  
parent shore of stern New England,  
his heart sore, his dulled  
bosom rent with sighs.

He mourned the vanished gods,  
the radiant sky, the dear land of love  
and song and lore. He mourned  
the sweet companionships  
of yore, that on his path like scattered  
pearls did lie.

But when she passed as in  
the former days, with the old halo  
on her golden hair, with her  
old kindness and enchanting  
ways it was as if some swift wind had  
cleared the air. Before her smile  
he stood transfixed there. He had  
forgotten that she was so fair.

## BONDAGE

“And this is freedom,” cried the serf,  
“at last I tread free soil, free air blows on me!”  
and, wild to learn the sweets of liberty,  
with eager hope his bosom bounded fast.

But not for naught had the long years  
amassed habit of slavery. Among the free he  
still was servile. Disheartened he crept  
back to the old bondage of the past.

Long did I bear a hard and heavy  
chain wreathed with amaranth and asphodel,  
but through the flower-breaths stole the  
weary pain. I cast it off and fled but

it was in vain; for when once more  
I passed by where it fell, I took it up  
and bound it on again.

## WITCH-HAZEL

It is said that 'mid the sylvan shrubs  
that grow one has a wizard power above  
the rest. Held over the soil it points  
its leafy crest to where the hidden  
sources sleep below.

How must the gentle earth rejoice  
when flow the pent-up streams and ease  
the aching breast, grown sore with  
guarding them, and ah how blest  
those springs to men who  
need of water know.

Beloved at thy touch the entire bliss  
of being floods me. In my heart straight-way  
songs rise and gush and murmur  
without end. And dear who knows  
but that some day, some one may  
be a little glad for this that thou hast wrought,  
and bless thee through my friend?

## CALM

Here let us rest within "the zone of calms,"  
found now at last, whose delicate mysteries  
escaped us on the old tempestuous seas,  
    through *their* best gifts  
        this charmed space embalms.

Here are soft shadows as of darkling  
palms whose branches faintly rustle in the  
breeze of summer morns,  
                    and gentle melodies as  
of hushed voices chanting low sweet psalms.

The tyrant Time, plying his ceaseless  
oar, will bear us farther all too soon,  
eastward and westward, parted as  
    before. But while we linger yet,  
each opposite shore still indistinct, take  
speech oh love once more, and bless  
    the rapturous stillness as we go.

# FANTASTIC SYMPHONY

We heard the symphony wherein  
the mad poet fancies his love a sweet,  
ever-recurring melody, piquing to pleasure,  
                                ministering to pain.

Now ballrooms echo it, now wood  
and plain take up the burden. Joyous  
now it sounds, now sad and fraught  
with mystery. All life  
interwoven with that strait thou art the melody  
of all my days,

I but an accidental note in thine,  
its value unobserved by alien ears. Remove it,  
still thy music is as fine,

but take thee from me  
and the void displays discord  
and inharmonious fall of tears.

THE SAME CANNOT BE  
OTHERWISE

Say not the charm is broken,  
that the old rapture has faded  
to a cool content, that flowers  
    so sweet at morn *must* lose  
their scent when toward life's  
    noon experience has rolled.

No whisper that the tale  
so often told fails in some measure  
of its blandishment, nor that  
    the chord jangles wherein  
were blent all harmonies  
    that music's voices hold.

Ah dear, a shining isle forever  
lies beyond the track of ships,  
upon the still sea where chains  
    are hid in wooing, soft disguise.  
More blest than freedom  
    seems captivity, for the old  
    Circe looks from out thine eyes, and  
    thy Odysseus does not wish to flee.

## FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE

Friendship sat smiling on a flowery  
height, watching blooming groves  
and meadows green, the peaceful  
stream that flowed through fields  
between.

“How rich my realm,” she breathed,  
“how glad, how bright!”

But on a sudden fell a purple light,  
deepening the tranquil beauty  
of the scene, tingling with amethyst  
hue the river’s sheen, as love  
drew near in majesty and might.

“This is my kingdom, sister!”  
quick he cried.

“My paths are not all stormy. There is calm  
upon my mountains and clear skies above.  
This radiant land thou views  
bears *my* balm, profounder far than  
thine.”

Then friendship sighed, but rose,  
and yielded up her seat to love.



## THE TROUBADOUR

Thou Troubadour, roaming from  
land to land, singing indeed, we grant  
one endless theme, thy lady's praise, and  
striving to redeem the pledges  
laid on thee by love's command.

But we are the truer lovers, we who  
stand beside our mistress, though no  
silver stream of song escape our lips.

Thou art the dream, we the realities  
her eyes have scanned.

"Know you," he answered, "how those  
lilies grow that on the lake's breast seem  
to float apart and free, though firmly  
fastened their roots below?  
Thus do I seem before the wind and  
tide of chance and change, to sway  
from side to side, but still my heart  
is anchored to her heart."

## THE GREEK YOUTH

“He goes,” she said, “there,  
at the opening door, I see a shimmer  
as of snow wings. It’s his white  
    robe that as he passes flings  
its shining undulation over the floor.”

But while she spoke, his fond  
arms as before held her, his kiss  
burned on her lips as sings some  
    woodland bird, his voice’s  
murmurings thrilled with the joyous  
    weight of love he bore.

It was the moonlight of  
thine own sad eyes that cast my  
shadow, in thy silver sphere,  
    half dusk, half light, ghosts  
    start at any breath. I bring the  
sunshine. In it no surprise can  
come, no shade can walk. Lo, I am here,  
beloved, and shall be here unto death.

## WANDERER'S LIFE

He has no home, owns no fatherland.  
His country is the hospitable earth. He  
    shapes his course where past fields  
the planet's greenest groves of plenty stand.

But however golden be the strand he  
treads, clearer than the sound of mirth and  
    laughter steals the voice that still to his  
best joy gives birth, more potent than command.

Again his ship he steers into one harbor,  
hastening to the saint before whose shrine his  
    constant offering glows. He heaps his  
treasure, won with blood and tears, there at her feet;

    praying without complaint, leaving  
    but to worship as he comes and goes.

## HER ROSES

Against her mouth she pressed the rose,  
and there beneath the caress of lips as soft  
and red as its own petals, quick the bright  
bud spread opened, and  
flung its fragrance on the air.

Can it wear a young bud's  
grace again? Oh love,  
regret it not! It gladly shed its soul for thee,  
and though thou kiss it dead it does not murmur  
at a fate so fair. Thus once thou breathes on

me, till every germ of love and song  
broke into rapturous flower and sent a  
challenge upwards to the sky. What  
if swift fruition set  
a term too brief to all things?  
I have lived my hour and die  
contented, since for thee I die.

## AT THE CONVENT

I cannot pass beyond the jealous  
gate and the high walls that, rising  
stern and grim like jealous guards  
    shut you within the dim, mysterious  
        space no man may penetrate.

But I can guess how the gray nuns  
chide, "Late thou comes sister; still thy  
lamp's to trim. Thy clear voice failed  
    us in the evening hymn wherewith the  
        grace of heaven we supplicate."

Dear, as some paltry coin a lady  
might fling to appease a beggar, as you go  
into your quiet cell and all is night,  
    tarry a moment at the casement  
    and throw the guerdon of your smile,  
        his way to light on your  
        poor errant minstrel down below.

## TWO FIGURES

One like a creature born of brighter  
spheres than these we know, a child  
of joy and light, brought gladness, beauty  
and love's blessed might, worship,  
praise and reverence shorn of fears.

And one receiving all that most  
endears soul to soul, and makes sweet the  
sight of him that gives, the offering to requite,  
placed in the other's hand an urn of tears.

Love veiled his brows and would  
have fled, but lo there came a whisper from  
the giver's breast that stayed his fluttering  
wings and held him back.

"Upon my head these gathered  
tears bestow a great and softening grace  
it else would lack; the crown of sorrow.  
Dear, thy gift is best."

## SERVICE

Show me some way in which  
my soul may serve thy soul and be its  
nourisher. Teach me some word  
to ease thy heart, soothing  
thy sore and startled nerve.

Let me aspire to lend some  
gracious curve to those straight lines  
dividing day from day. Help me  
to hold the errant feet that stray in  
paths of constancy that never swerve.

Sometimes I fail to reach thee.  
The ascent being so steep to where thou  
dwells. In vain are my hands rich with gifts  
thou can not take.

But could I see my life blood, for  
thy sake to profit thee flow in a crimson  
stain, dear I believe that I could die content.

## COMMUNION

One cannot draw the bars against  
friends and guests that crowd for entrance  
at his gate. He opens inviting, nor  
the simple state of his abode  
against their train defends.

But there are chambers where  
the lover tends his sacred fires, where no  
feet penetrate save immortals where,  
early and late, the breath  
of prayer and sacrifice ascends.

In such a spot as this, as in the  
shrine of some white temple in a dusk  
made sweet with incense, far from  
outer noise and heat, the hollow haste  
of them that part and meet,  
surrounded by dim presences divine,  
my soul communes eternally with thine.



## A PRAYER

Not through my merits but your grace,  
immortal powers that set me free, I stand before  
you face to face, and share in your eternity.

I know beyond this path so fair there  
opens the dark abyss. I know that wreck  
and ruin there may be the end of too much bliss.

But spare me if my humble dread appease  
the Fate yourselves obey, then on my bowed but  
crowned head let not your shafts descend to slay!

Your altars all I light with fires where  
deepest awe and reverence meet. And garlanded  
with gained desires I cling, still suppliant, to your feet.

## JOACHIM

Across the strings the sympathetic  
bow swept, held and guided by a master-hand.  
Like the enchanted beauty long  
ago who slumbered, chained by  
magic bar and band till on her lips the  
appointed prince pressed  
the liberating kiss and she awoke.

So beneath the bow's long-drawn  
desired caress, swift into full and perfect  
being broke, freed from the violin  
the prisoned tones.

In myriad measure swelled the  
melody, bewailing now with sobs and  
broken moans the bondage past,  
now joyous to be free.  
And as the strain began to rise and roll,  
the soul of music met the artist's soul.

## IN FREEDOM

I always go there and am silent.  
The bird sings above and by the branches  
of the spruce the friendly sun penetrates.  
The flowers bloom on the meadows,  
                    the seasons change and go.  
Far in the distance like giants,  
the high mountains stand.

The lovely shade lies on the earth  
of the world's chest; the knowing clouds  
fly in the sky and dance before desire.  
Oh preserve yourself dear earth,  
                    for you pull me to your  
heart with luring gestures and  
gone is all pain, gone is

suffering, as forgotten are  
my hurries and hastes, bliss and joy  
awake, and only peace and rest remain.

## THE ROSE AND THE STATUE

The Rose said to the Statue

"Thou art cold and passionless, though  
beautiful and grand. I all my life exhale,  
while thou dost stand unmoved,  
unmindful of the sweets I hold."

The Statue answered to the Rose

"Thou poor, frail creature, toy and  
wanton of a day, I scarce can stoop  
to note thy swift decay. Lo, thou  
art fading *now*, but *I* endure."

Thus each reproached the other.

Neither thought what various means  
lead to an end the same. How manifold  
is beauty and what claim to the  
world's gratitude the other brought.

Oh Statue shine in majesty,

replete with high suggestions of eternal  
things. Oh Rose yield up thy breath and  
die, for the wings of love receive it,  
and thy breath is sweet.

One must be cold and suffer.

It is earth's blight. One must be warm  
and suffer. Thus the poles touch  
in a law unchanging,  
but the souls of Statue  
and of Rose can never unite.

## THE MUSE SPEAKS

Child thine aspiring sense divines  
doubtless, the voice that speaks to thee.  
Arise across the tossing sea a path  
of light and glory shines.

It leads unto the fields of art  
whose golden harvests thou may reap,  
and 'mid thy garnered treasures keep, if  
humble and devout of heart.

Go dwell with gods and heroes.  
Learn the lessons mighty marbles teach,  
and of the laurel-crowned their  
speech that through the  
centuries must burn.

Then lowly kneel at Nature's feet  
and from her beating bosom draw wisdom,  
without whose perfect law  
the best of art were incomplete.

Listen in climes of warmth and light  
to the sweet-throated nightingales.  
Watch till the morn's embrace prevails  
the starry splendours of the night.

On shores where placid waters roll  
invite the breezes of the South, till their  
fleet kisses pass thy mouth,  
and penetrate thine inmost soul.  
Then when thy voice grows full

and strong, when all within,  
without is fair, pierce with thy call the expectant  
air, and wake thy lyre to Lesbian song.

## PROPITIATION

A fresh wind blows against the land,  
the crested waves toss to and fro,  
as swelling waves and shining sand glitter  
like rifts of frozen snow. The breath  
of morn lies soft and dim upon the sea.

The tender trace of pink along the  
horizon's rim her lips have left  
in that azure space. So on the threshold  
of the morn, before the unclosing door  
I wait. Will hope expire? Will joy

be born? How stands it in the  
book of fate? Oh sisters three, who  
hold the distaff, spin the thread,  
and weave all human destiny  
into a pattern bright or dread,

I ask no boon of you, for desire and  
fear you know. I only bring in words  
that morning hours inspire propitiatory  
offering. And though no altars  
rise apart where men your awful praise  
rehearse, I build an altar in my heart,  
and on it lay my pleading verse.

## THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

I. Guarded by walls of roses set with thorns,  
within her palace-room the princess  
slept nor heard how through the wood the  
loud chase swept with bay of hounds  
and note of hunting-horns.

Into some dream of summer eves and morns  
perchance a sudden thrill prophetic crept, as  
to her side one eager hunter leapt, made strong  
by love that bans and barriers scorn.

Before his tread, as at some sharp blade's  
stroke a flower might fall, the deep  
enchantment broke. He pressed his lips  
to hers in love's long kiss, and as  
her name in rapturous tone he spoke, with  
happy smiling eyes the princess woke  
to meet the new and unsuspected bliss.

II. Once more in slumbering state a princess  
lay, while in the shadow of her palace-walls  
unheeded died the glad and pleading calls,  
the outer world of love and joy that sway.

But when towards evening sped her peaceful  
day, despite a charm that soul and sense enthrals,  
into the stillness of her perfumed halls, on  
fire with love I made my venturous way.

Lo I have waked her with my ardent lips, have  
seen the warm blood mantle in her cheek that

surged impetuous round my own heart's core. Yet  
once again she sank in sleep's eclipse. Oh be  
more powerful now that word I speak, that  
touch I give! Sweet princess, sleep no more!

MY DAY WAS HAPPY,  
AND HAPPY MY NIGHT

My day was joyous. Happy was my night.  
My people's plaudits rang whenever the lyre  
of poetry I struck, my song's sweet fire has  
kindled many a flame intense and bright.

My summer blossoms still, but piled  
and stored within my barns have I each golden  
ear of corn, and all that made the world so dear  
now must I leave, leave all I so adored.

The hand falls from the harp-strings.  
Shattered lie the fragments of the glass with  
life replete, that gayly on my haughty  
lips I pressed. Oh God how hateful-bitter

it is to die, oh God how heavenly it is to live,  
how sweet is this enchanting little earthly nest!



## THE CHOICE

Would I could choose the sweet and  
simple way? Could I but curb the spirit's  
will yearning for flight to spheres unimaginable,  
          heavenly bright, and in the shelter  
                    of thy bosom stay.

Thy love is like a clear consoling ray  
that from some cottage window cleaves the night,  
bidding the quest to comfort, warmth and light,  
          which I fain would enter  
                    did I dare delay.

But it is vain. A pearl and emerald  
studded car awaits, its charioteer with streaming  
curls and lustrous eyes, who beckons as  
          the pale earth swoons. I mount,  
                    and the winged  
steeds soar aloft, as far  
from thy still home its freight the chariot whirls  
          beyond the limits of the suns and moons.

## ENJOY YOURSELF

Hail and farewell! Thus in our brief  
career the greetings follow, for our paths  
unite but to diverge and those so near and  
dear today tomorrow vanish out of sight.

But brave and patient heart feel no  
dismay. For though they pass as it were  
behind a veil, thy dear ones are not lost, but  
all thy way is gladdened  
with their voices crying hail!

And when thou stands on the shadowy  
brink of the profound Unknown thy parting  
knell shall be your psalm of love,  
and thou shall sink on sleep's soft  
breast, soothed by their fond farewell!

## THE RIGHT GARDEN

Clad in a garb of centuries,  
like solemn warders of the past, above  
its secret hoards amassed stand the  
                    funereal cypress-trees.

And each to each they nod and  
wave and whisper how the king of kings  
is death, and how all human things  
                    bloom but to wither in the grave.

But down below the city lies,  
near where the shining river runs within  
whose breast a thousand suns are  
                    mirrored from the cloudless  
skies. In the crowded market-place, in  
square and street, with gay and  
                    fluttering flags, for all the glad

life of today pulses and surges  
everywhere. Beneath the Past's almighty  
shade the careless Present keeps  
its cheer and though the end  
                    is sure and near, yet we press  
                    onward undismayed.

Verona,  
December, 1878.

AFTERMATH,  
J. W. Died March, 1879.

Brave Heart grown cold, did  
thou not know full recognition when  
the field was green in June, and  
glad to yield its wealth to them  
who come to mow?

And were there some who  
doubted, some unwitting that perchance  
thy peer moved not in  
distant ranks or near, upon  
whose lips thy praise grew dumb?

Such is the meed of genius,  
such experience proves the frequent  
fate that 'mid the small attends  
the great, thy, bringing little,  
sneer at much.

But the late summer comes,  
when once more his scythe the reaper  
sets, and for the season's store-house  
gets a new sweet crop  
to profit men.

So they as yet unborn shall reap  
the harvest of thy steadfastness,  
and thy soul's noble law, and bless  
the mighty "fruits of them that sleep."

SCHUMANN'S SYMPHONY  
IN B FLAT MAJOR

A trumpet-call the slumbering  
sense awakes, and challenges to action  
and to fight. But swift the plumed line  
of battle breaks, and breathing  
over the brows of love alight,  
the rhythm adrift with human joys  
and woes, goes wandering with a question  
and a sigh throughout all life's expectancy, to  
die at last in notes of rapture as it rose.

The patriot Swiss who clasped  
the hostile spears, and through his bleeding  
breast carved freedom's way, had known  
his peer on many a glorious day, had  
Schumann's muse been born of  
earlier years. For when such strains as these  
the heart must greet, great deeds  
seem easy, and to die were sweet.

## RUBINSTEIN

Amid expectant silence, grave and  
still he laid his hands upon the pallid keys.  
Straightway the notes began to throb and  
thrill. Mirrored in sound  
were the mighty mysteries,

fathomless of human life. Its needs  
and hopes, doubts, fears, fancies and  
questionings appeared, and last the tramp of  
funeral steeds, those trappings of the grave.

On mighty wings uprose the  
stirring chords till the great dead heard  
where they wandered on the shadowy way.

Hushed for a moment was their  
solemn tread, and athwart space a whisper  
seemed to stray. Hail great interpreter  
of god-like men! Beneath thy  
quickenning touch we live again.

## CHOPIN

The polonaise is danced, the waltz  
is done, the guests are gone. But still the  
vague regret that breathed through  
    all things since the fete began,  
waits and unrest and longing linger yet.

Into the night there lie repose  
and peace. Hark how the wandering  
voices meet and flow in rhythm.

Hear now those calm accords and  
low, like dim forebodings of a swift release.

“Whom the gods love die young.”  
So Chopin thou heard early, through  
the harmonies that stirred thy poet brain,  
    the inevitable *Now* made answer,  
smiling to the summoning word, and  
sung to sleep on Music’s tender breast,  
    sank gladly into an untroubled rest.

TO R. W. E.

As sweeps a wind at morning  
cool and clear, against the wavering mists  
that break and flee, leaving the wide  
blue prairies of the sea outstretched  
in sunlit splendour far and near.

As in the early breeze's fresh embrace,  
the autumn flowers shake off their sleep  
and shine, gold and purple 'mid a blaze  
of scarlet vine, and all the fields  
are clothed with joy and grace.

So loftiest Teacher sweep thy winged  
words against the mists and errors of  
our days. So to thy voice respond  
a thousand chords that slumbered,  
thrilling to perfected praise.

And beneath the breath of thine  
inspiring mood, the soul grows strong  
and life seems sweet and good.



## CHAU CER

A limpid source, a clear and  
bubbling spring born in some wooded dell  
unknown of heat, above whose breast  
the leafy branches meet and kiss and  
earthward wavering shadows fling,

upon whose brink the perfumed  
flower-cups swing, beneath the light tread  
of hurrying insect feet.

Such Chaucer seems the sturdy  
note and sweet in thine unfettered song  
re-echoing. Hence they who  
sometimes weary of the play  
of fountains and the artificial jets

which in gay parks and gardens  
dance and leap, turn back again into that  
forest-way where thy fresh stream the grass  
and mosses wet that slumber on its  
margin cool and deep.

## KINGS

Read of kings and princes, how  
they sought with flattering word and deed  
to hold the dower their sires

bequeathed, and with new grants  
of power the sufferance  
of the half-freed nations bought.

How vain and foolish is their race,  
I thought, who strut upon the stage their  
little hour, yet like the meanest

mortal, in the flower of pride and  
pomp, must perish and be  
naught. Then fell the seer's words

across my page, the only king and  
sovereign by God's grace is he who melts  
all wills into his own.

When this one comes to claim his  
heritage how we fall back  
to give the monarch place, and bend  
the obedient knee before his throne!

## A SHATTERED GLASS

Among the curious trifles  
travellers show are bits  
    of flashing, rainbow-tinted  
glass, dropped by the hand of time,  
that in the grass of seldom-trodden  
    fields half-hidden glow.

What cups and bowls they  
fashioned who may know?

But tales they tell to new  
men of past old-time feasts and  
revels, and alas, of pride and  
    joy that perished long ago!

That was a beauteous vase  
from which we drank sunshine  
    and smiles and love's sweet  
potions, till from hands too weak  
to bear its weight it sank, and  
    its frail rainbows shattered.

If you will let us take up  
the fragments while we thank  
a gracious heaven,  
    that these are left us still.

## WEAVING

Fair-armed Helen in her  
fragrant room, while the bloody  
fight raged in the plain below  
beyond her sight, worked at  
a purple garment on the loom.

Into the web she wove pictures  
of gloom and glory, deeds of prowess  
and of might, labours of Greeks  
and Trojans till black night  
enwrapped them and they came  
upon their doom.

Thus on the spreading loom  
of time we weave the garment  
of our life; the web we crowd  
with shifting images by fate  
allowed to fill from nothingness  
our short reprieve, and haste the  
work although so loath to leave what,  
being finished, serves us for a shroud.

## SURPLUS

What fullest sunshine heaven  
reveals has glittered in the temple-walls  
of his abode, and life on him whose  
richest gifts bestowed which else  
with niggard hand it most conceals.

The obstacles at which the faint  
soul feels its strength gives way, were  
crushed when not the goad to new  
success, like pebbles on the  
road scarce noticed beneath a  
conqueror's chariot-wheels.

But his heart trembled, for he  
wisely said, I am unworthy of this  
perfect feast. Lo I bring offerings  
to each jealous god, let not one  
be forgot, not even the least.

If so I may escape the  
avenging rod. Of states  
too prosperous I am afraid.

## FLORENCE

Like some fair woman on whose  
breast are hung jewels of price,  
so decked from side to side with

towers and domes and  
palaces, in pride and state  
she sits the circling hills among.

Into her lap the centuries have  
flung their splendid spoils, and art  
with art has vied to weave her  
charmed raiment, to abide  
and keep her ever beautiful  
and young. And those who pass

beneath her potent sway she  
welcomes nobly, and with royal mien  
points where her garnered stores  
of treasure lie. Take of  
them what you will she  
seems to say, here are no limits  
for a queen am I, generous  
in giving as befits a queen.

## ROME AFTER 1870

Mother of Nations on whose  
classic brow glittered in turn the  
imperial diadem, the royal fillet,  
and that brighter gem with which  
free men their chosen chief endow.

Today's fresh crown prints  
nobler furrows now upon thy front  
than left by all of them. New  
pearls of promise deck thy  
garment's hem and thy pulse quivers

at a people's vow. Child of these later  
times yield to thy land again the  
blessings it has rendered thee  
last, precious conquest of a  
valiant band, weary of bondage,  
struggling to be free, resolved on  
union be the strong right Hand,  
as still thou art the Heart of Italy!

## ANTINOUS OF THE VATICAN

Antinous, upon thy brow of snow  
it seems as if the gathered sunshine  
lay of ages, and about thy sweet lips  
    play the same glad smiles  
        that wreathed them long ago.

Thy curls' luxuriant clusters  
seem to glow with the old life.  
We almost hear thee say the word  
    thou used to murmur in that day  
        when love's kiss burned  
    on thy mouth's perfect bow.

O sweetest youth that ever  
human eyes have gazed upon,  
thou makes the heart grow warm  
    of him who lifts his glance  
        to thee above. And thine,  
    besides the charm of face and  
form, his higher fame of whom the poet cries,  
"how noble is his end who dies for love!"



## ON LEAVING ITALY

As one who gazes on a dear  
dead face, when all is over,  
but cannot let it go. And with  
hot tears and accents weak  
with woe pleads one last reprieve  
for one little space,  
before the grave shall  
cover all that grace which even  
in death the pallid features show.

So shall we knowing that  
while the stream of life must flow  
no newer love this old one can  
replace. I turn once more,  
and yet land of my love I lingeringly  
look on thee. Then sounds the  
message that the further  
shore cries to its messenger, the  
unfeeling sea. Farewell oh Italy my Italy!

## WHOM HE LOVES, HE CHASTENS

Even as the sculptor's chisel,  
flake on flake, scales off the marble  
till the beauty pent sleeping  
    within the block's imprisonment,  
    beneath the wounding strokes,  
        begins to wake.

So love which the high gods  
choose to make their sharpest  
instrument has shaped and bent  
    the stubborn spirit, till it  
    yields content its few and slender  
        graces for love's sake.

But the perfected statue proudly  
rears its whiteness for the world to see  
and prize, the past hurt buried in  
    forgetfulness, while the imperfect  
    nature grown more wise,  
        turns with its new-born  
    good the streaming tears of pain  
    undried, the chastening hand to bless.

## JOYFUL POSSESSION

Into the box where he tightly  
cupped my gifts also, some of the  
love for him is rendered this hot prayer,  
and my harp is his also.

I gate for you no longer my beautiful  
treasures, and carry to you this offering,  
of my mind, of silver and gold,  
and these flowers of desire.

Between drops of blood my nets  
of tears scintillate as diamonds. If we  
do not remain and my poor heart  
breaks, still will I have this celestial dream,  
that for a moment you were my friend.

## A WHIM

I send you flowers, my precious  
one, like a monk severely tried for a  
long time, this my whim for you,  
and you for me. Like the perfume  
of these flowers, suave and  
expensive, but fleeting alas will be my  
memory of you, and you for me.

When youth flees and age fast  
advances can beings awaken themselves  
for you, (perhaps for me also,) the thought  
like a flash through this sad night,  
how my heart beat one  
day for you and yours for me.

Thus let us enjoy, my child.  
We embrace my crumb. Before my soft  
whim for you passes, and holds its for me.

#### IN LELA

Remote country of destiny,  
this place has me, my heart turns  
before you, my friend.

Here heats the sun upon  
one beautiful spring, and then there  
is snow, ice and cold, a sparkling  
wonder, for the winter has  
this responsibility, like a great king.

But not heat, neither the flowers  
nor the gleaming of the sky are  
as the true spring in our hearts,

Oh my friend, that regrets in the thought  
that we once were beautiful. Alas, fly away.

#### SONG OF YESTERDAY

Where are the pinks of yesterday?  
Plague, haymaker, the wind does not  
spill their beautiful sheets on the ground.

Where is the love of yesterday? Died,  
misunderstood, faint as a sigh lost in the air.

Where is the faith of yesterday? Fly away  
on the impure wings of a too cold thin life.

Faith and love of yesterday, and you dear pinks.

Softest things, aren't they always those of yesterday?

## TO ROME

City of cities! In your laughing  
luminosity the sun shines on your ground  
where history spans the flood  
of its treasures, and brilliantly  
unites the ancient glory with the present,  
to the future.

City of cities! While the river  
of life runs rapidly pale shadows cover  
your beautiful spaces where I dwell,  
though of calm and the calm one  
there waits for us a familiar peace.

City of cities! You bear the  
burden of every delight and despair,  
in your contemplation there  
is joined the rice and wedding  
feast, on your heart you live impatiently  
to live, oh Rome, and to die.

## LIGHT LOVE

That one I gave for you?  
That breath of the rose blowing to you  
on the path, arousing the memory  
of one sad and discouraged  
spring to your thoughts. You collect in order  
the poor little flower, and he dies.

That six you gave for me? A  
warm and gentle beam from the beautiful  
sun sends life in this chest  
to you the beloved of May,  
while the outside world is cold. But  
falls the night.

We enjoy the warmth of the sun,  
the gentle odour of the rose, but fleeting  
mid the night the scent goes. You cover me  
with kisses while still love lives in you.

## GOODBYE TO ROME

Hush majestic, you who part  
from us feel no pain. There is but the  
eternal splendour of your face,  
luminous and high, which turns  
toward the traveller in the final hour,  
which prompts the sad heart  
with a loving speech for you.

My thoughts encircle you beloved,  
like the arms of one burning with ample  
love for the object of their desire.

You that carry me through every  
obligation, even as I leave still is there  
indescribable joy which for you I feel.

Goodbye. Goodbye.

## NATURE AND LOVE

Day after day I watch the fine  
dividing line, scarcely discerned, 'twixt  
sea and sky beneath me lie smooth shining  
sands, and overhead  
clear heavens outspread.

Day after day through balmy hours  
I pluck the flowers from heavy-laden  
shrub and tree; the fleur-de-lis, purple  
and tall, and  
blue-eyed grass bloom where I pass.

Often the wood-bird's clear note  
rings and insect wings flit gay and glittering

down the breeze, while gold-ringed bees  
drink from a fragrant flower-cup  
its sweet draughts up.

Here 'mid the scented pines  
I dream until I seem a monarch in an  
ancient time, a time sublime,  
when earth gave all men  
frank and free, what she gives me.

But often when the restless waves  
my light boat braves, a mariner destined  
to explore an unknown shore am I.  
All day beneath the sun,  
my voyage begun, I sing glad songs  
of conquering men, though silent  
when the moon her pale flame  
lights above and crowned with love.

What in that word I half express  
dost thou not guess? A dearer hope  
than nature gives forever lives,  
filling my soul. There floods my heart  
a joy apart from seas or flowers  
or glowing noons, or suns or moons.

Through all the glory and the grace  
I see thy face in the waves' whisper,  
soft and clear thy voice I hear. Thy smile  
through every hour falls, and blesses all.



## HELEN

Without the walls of Troy the  
Grecian host encamped, lay spent and  
weary with the fight. Eve after eve they  
watched the golden light of suns  
whose splendours seemed to mock them  
most when most they prayed. For morn  
on morn they rose to suffer fresh  
defeats and bear new woes.

They could not curse because  
she was so fair, the cause of all the ruin.  
But the bands of heroes stretched  
to heaven beseeching hands,  
while wrung from lips grown  
pallid with despair a cry arose  
throughout the camp's domain,  
re-echoing far across the barren plain,  
till all the midnight air one name did bear  
Helen! Helen! Helen!

Within the walls of Troy the fires  
blazed bright. Song and dance were  
gay and wine flowed free,  
where flushed with joy and pride  
and victory they held their revels  
far into the night, nor paused to listen  
to the warning voice that bade them  
rather tremble than rejoice.

But lifting high their wine-cups  
crowned with flowers, "O loveliest lady  
of the land of Greece, whose bright eyes  
bringing glory lead to peace,

we drink to thee through all  
the happy hours," they cried, and poured  
the crimson juices out, pledging her deep  
and long with shout on shout till all  
the midnight air one name did bear  
Helen! Helen! Helen!

Our heroes on the battle-fields  
within them rage the conflicts that  
despair and doubt and pain, with love,  
beauty and their countless train  
of pleasures and of pomps forever  
wage. Now Sorrow spreads her pall  
and claims the fight. Now her pale  
hosts surrender to delight.  
But whether tossing on mad  
waves of joy I drink great draughts  
of rapture as of wine, or sunk beneath  
a chill and bitter brine I lie prey  
to every vile annoy, one image  
rules each smile, controls each sigh. And  
like the men of old to her I cry till  
all the midnight air one name doth bear  
Helen! Helen! Helen!

#### A DREAM OF DEATH

I died. They wrapped me in a shroud  
with hollow mourning far too loud, and sighs  
that were but empty sound. They laid me  
low within the ground.

I felt *her* tears through all the rest,

past sheet and shroud they reach my breast.  
They warmed to life the frozen clay  
                                and I began to smile and say,  
                                at last thou loves me, Helena!

I rose upon the dead of night. I sought  
her window, it was alight. A pebble clattered  
against the pane.

“Who’s there? the wind  
and falling rain?”

“Ah, no. But one thy tears have  
led to leave his chill, narrow bed,  
to warm himself before thy breath, who  
for thy sake has conquered death.  
Arise and love me Helena!”

She opened the door, and drew  
me in. Her mouth was pale, her cheek was  
thin, her eyes were dim. Fell loosely down  
her hair of gold, its length unrolled.

My presence wrought her grief's eclipse.  
She pressed her lips upon my lips. She held  
me fast in her embrace, her hands went  
wandering over my face, at last  
thou loves me, Helena!

The days are dark, the days are cold,  
and heavy lies the churchyard mould. But  
ever in the deep of night, their faith the  
dead and living plight.

Who would not die if certain bliss

could be foreknown? And such as this no life,  
away the hour is nigh, with heart on fire she  
waits my cry. Arise and love me, Helena!

## FAUST AND HELENA

I. When all that life contains of rich and good  
had failed to bring content to Faust there rose the form  
wherein were blent all graces of all beauty's sisterhood.

Victorious Helen, young as when first wooed  
by Theseus, lovely as when heroes bent their steps to  
death and seas of blood were spent to win her,  
fairest of all the heavenly brood.

But from his longing arms that at last embraced  
this shade of beauty and were blest, she fled to pale  
Persephone's domain. Oh rise again sweet spirit! Let the  
past yield to the present. Here upon my breast forget  
the courts that wait for thee in vain.

II. As unto Faust when all life held had failed to  
bring content the Beauteous One returned, summoned  
from Hades at whose sight gods burned and  
goddesses with sudden envy paled.

So when the banquet of this world regaled  
my spirit poorly, all for which it yearned rose in thy  
presence and my eyes discerned in thine the whole  
of loveliness unveiled.

But from his clasping arms the vision  
fled back to the silent realms and once more left

him lone, unsatisfied and desolate. Sweet, vanish  
never lest my heart bereft should consume itself  
with longing for its dead  
delight, and to despair be consecrate.

## WAKING

I woke once more. The sphered ocean-spaces  
lay empty and vast, behind, before, where we  
must blindly trace our way from unknown shore  
to unknown shore, the moon's  
cold gleam faint with morn.

The stars had paled but chanting one incessant  
theme of loss and sorrow they bewailed the fading  
of my happy dream. Oh bitter sea, they cried,  
whereon he floats alone and  
joyless. Now his dream and he have  
parted, whose divine light shone  
crested the waves of memory!

Oh envious fate whose ruthless hand  
the vision tore, who robbed his bosom of the  
freight so dear, so matchless, that it bore,  
and left it bare and desolate!

So swelled the song from star to star  
and like a stain upon the morn rolled along  
the sea the echo of the strain, ceaseless regret  
for grief and wrong.  
But then my heart that strove

for courage and would hide in smiles its  
smart, with words half true, half false, replied,  
of man's great load each lifts his part.

And why despair?  
Surely these morning clouds

shall change to evening clouds, and  
they will bear fresh dreams along their fleecy  
range and with new landscapes paint the air,  
until the last deep sleep,  
when over all the woes of love and life the  
earth is cast, and, stilled in absolute repose,  
dreaming and waking both are past.

#### AT SEA

I.       What lies beyond the far horizon's rim?  
Ah, could our ship but reach and anchor there what  
wondrous scenes, what visions bright and fair would  
meet the eyes that gazed across the brim.

But though we crowd the canvas on and  
trim our barque with skill, the proud waves seem  
to bear no nearer to that goal and everywhere  
stretches an endless circle wide and dim.

So do we dream, treading the narrow path  
of life between the bounds of day and night.  
Tomorrow turns this page so often conned. But  
when tomorrow comes it hath the limits  
of today, and in its light still lies far off  
the unknown heaven beyond.

II.        We sail the centre of a ceaseless round,  
forever circled by the horizon's rim. And fondly  
deem that from that far-off brim some sign will rise  
                 or some glad tidings sound.

But no word comes to break the bound  
of sea and sky all day with distance dim, and  
vanished quite when darkness, chill and grim,  
                 about the deep her sable shroud has wound.  
So on the seas of life and time we drift  
within the circling limits of our fate, expectant  
ever of some solving breath. But no sound comes,  
                 no pitying hand lifts the veil nor faith  
                 nor love can penetrate, and to our dusk  
                 succeeds the dark of death.

## TO ROME

I.        In a Garden of Armida flows a stream  
of sweet oblivion, where the roar and din  
of far-off fights is heard no more, where  
                 for all wounds some healing balsam grows.

It is a dream in which no dread of waking  
throws its darkling shadow over the fancy's store,  
but where the radiant-fingered hours outpour  
                 long draughts of rest, refreshment, and repose.

Both these, a vision, an enchanted space,  
city of cities when the eyes have seen thy deeper  
mysteries, does thou appear. Fain would the heart,  
in homage to thy grace and grandeur cry  
                 that the wide world might hear, hail

mighty Rome, my mistress and my queen!

II. Like an overwhelming wind that sweeps  
along the path on which glad bands of pilgrims come,  
lashing their limbs till they grow stiff and numb,  
smiting their lips and robbing them of song.

So do thy mighty shadows move among  
the daily shows, upon their fronts the sum and story  
of the Past, and speech is dumb, and dead desire  
before that wondrous throng.

What should he prate whose ear is strained  
to catch their voiceless accents? How torment  
the heart with thoughts aside from their imperious  
sway? Back every crowding image, while we  
watch the spirits' progress and even thou  
depart, oh love unanswered. This is not thy day.

III. As in the presence of the loved one fly,  
for him who loves, the golden-winged hours, so  
'mid the circle of thy charm, with showers  
of gifts and benisons the days go by.

And as his mistress still the lover's eye  
invests with new-found beauties, so fresh flowers  
upon thy bounteous lap the lavish Powers seem  
to our dazzled sight to multiply.

And one divinely-drunken spirit nods  
above the cup thou bears, crying, it's fraught  
with joy. Drink deep while the wine overflows.  
But one more wise a warning word bestows.

Heart, let thy bliss be tempered by the thought



that excess of rapture pleases not the gods.

WONDER

To E. B.

It is a wonder when day breaks from  
those portals of the night, and with her joyous  
smile and bright crowns the high hills where  
darkness lay, flooding the outstretching plains  
with light. A wonder when the bud  
perceives how tight its petals press, growing  
impatient of control, until she throws, nourished  
by dews of morn and eves wide in the air  
the perfect rose.

Or when the gilded butterfly wakes  
from the sleep in which were furled the joyous  
wings about him curled and breaks the shell  
and floating high goes on his glad way  
throughout the world.

But greater marvels than these are  
such as harbor in the soul, like words within  
some fast-sealed scroll, concealing close what  
mysteries? Then strikes the hour  
and they unroll when eyes once  
cold that looked askance kindle at ours, and  
send a ray of warmth and cheer along our way,  
and with their deep, tender glance herald  
the dawn of love's new day.

When lips we never thought to taste  
thrill beneath our own, when fond arms reach

about us, when quick heart-beats teach how  
burns the breast we hold embraced.

Then are love's signs more eloquent  
than speech.

And when these things are should  
we not lift the heart to heaven with thankful  
prayer that, working wonders everywhere,  
it wrought for us this gracious gift,  
than which no other is more fair?

Dear, while I whisper bend thy cheek  
a little nearer, where my strong deep praise  
and sweet new joy belong. Thou knows the sense  
of what I speak, the happy secret of my song.

## FOUNTAINS IN ROME

Before St. Peter's, like wreaths of  
spotless snow over the bare, sad earth the  
pitying winter breathes, as proud jets  
flash into the air. But where the water  
breaks and falls and meets the sun,  
with every gem it glows wherewith  
shall deck her walls one day  
the new Jerusalem.

While here beside a mighty pile where  
spoils of splendid ages gleam, the Triton  
with an endless smile uplifts to heaven  
his slender stream. And there Bernini's  
grotesque taste with nymphs and gods  
the square adorns, and giants grouped  
in circles placed wide basins

from their horns.

Here Trevi, whose enchanted pool,  
when hearts with parting anguish burn,  
will yield in draughts divinely cool  
    consoling promise of return. And  
here come the doves to bathe and drink  
and seek for shade amid noon's glare  
    beneath the fountain's brink, or  
    'mid the mermen's clustering hair.

But these, the body's thirst that slake,  
that pour in many a loved retreat their fresh  
and limpid floods, that make the beauty  
    of a Roman street, seem but the images  
of those deep sources 'mid the city's span,  
that in their hoary breasts enclose  
    the wondrous history of man.

Rome, of these fountains of thy lore  
let my soul but drink. Not all in vain be  
opened for me thy matchless store,  
    nor closed without return again.  
Let some sweet stream of tuneful praise  
towards thy clear heaven its voice uplift,  
    along whose flow shall shine and blaze  
    the gracious rainbow of thy gift.

#### FROM NAPLES TO ROME

The sun set. The wide Campagna  
stretched about us like a sea. Miles on miles  
of billowy distance scarce a limit seemed

to be to the great immensity.

Till upon the far horizon, through  
the mist the hills rose higher, and upon  
three tallest summits, shooting like  
a golden spire, heavenwards  
blazed like a beacon fire.

And we knew that in the evening  
stillness, where the eternal dome rises over  
tower and palace lay our long-desired home,  
lay the great enchantress, Rome.

Watch-fires kindled by the ages  
where the passing moments pour all the  
present's shifting fuel on the accumulated store,  
till the pile glows more and more,  
to the grand and wondrous

precincts of her hoary walls invite.  
And with longing for the morning to reveal them  
to our sight, grateful hearts thanked God that night.

IN MEMORIAM B. H. C. (At Sorrento)

I. The summer strews with lavish  
hand her gems upon this Southern shore,  
with gold and emeralds glows the land,  
and sapphires from the ocean's floor.  
The sun a glittering ruby gleams, each  
star a topaz, while the mist that over the  
mountain summits streams is set with  
many an amethyst.

Unto the evening's gates of pearl  
there leads an opal-paved way, and pearly  
are the clouds that curl about the bosom  
of the day. But oft upon the radiant  
scene thy image of my friend  
appears, and all the jewels that have  
been are changed to diamonds in my tears.

II. With flowers and lights the altars  
blazed, the white-robed priests, with  
crosses raised and banners fluttering  
onward came, 'mid many a candle's  
flickering flame. The gentle dusk  
its mantle wrapped about the landscape  
quiet lapped the land, until the pious throng  
uplifted a thanksgiving song.

Then held on high, that over all  
with equal light its rays might fall, and  
equal grace to all afford was borne  
the body of our Lord. And at its sight,  
upon their knees the people fell  
as when a breeze sweeps over the summer  
earth at morn, bowing a field of uncut corn.

Why should thy spirit seem to shine  
here, where a creed so unlike thine lavished  
the treasures of its art, and through  
the senses touched the heart?

I know not, but as with the rest  
I knelt, thy memory dear and blest, a living  
presence seemed to be, and sacred grew

the hour to me.

## ON THE PINCIAN

Their dusky boughs the pine-trees  
lift against the heaven's transcendent hue,  
nor does the faintest cloudlet drift one film  
across the perfect blue.

The world lies bathed in sunshine.  
Hill and hollow, fountain and circling stream  
sparkle with light, and hushed and  
still the city, like a dream.

So smiles the Present, while the Past,  
mysterious and dim about it lies, guarding  
the kingdoms wide and vast, invisible  
to human eyes. But  
whispering to human ears with speech  
more potent than our own, the story  
of the by-gone years, in low, perpetual tone.

It tells how soon the race was for  
others over, how we soon shall be with kings  
and emperors gone before but shadows  
of reality. And how  
we pass that they may come whom  
time's swift courses bear along, how other  
lips when ours are dumb, shall  
blossom into song,

as now we sing beside their graves  
whose rhythmic laughter once made glad  
the earth, whose gentle memory

craves from us more  
tender words than sad, and as today  
over quick and dead  
extends the sky's unsullied space.

So ever over us shall spread the  
infinite embrace that change is not, that  
destiny rules with a calm, impartial sway,  
that to all eyes is given  
to see the generous beauty of the day.  
And last sweet comfort unto men,

the thought an armor against despair,  
since this world is so blest, shall then a future  
be less fair? With  
thoughts like these of peace  
and rest amid the noon's effulgent light, has  
soothed, not terrified the breast, with shadows  
of the coming night. And here within  
the soul's true home  
beneath thy calm and tranquil sky,  
while making life all joy oh Rome, thou teaches  
how to die.





Part II.

The Poems of  
Lady Daibu



THE SORROWS OF DAIBU  
(Poetess of the Taira-Minamoto War.)

I. The miseries I have seen.  
What wretched fate is mine . . .  
                    I still go on living!  
What kinds of thoughts?  
                    Beneath the moon I.  
Wet my sleeve with tears?  
Am I to end my days . . .  
These black longings unfulfilled?  
Battered by tumult of waves?  
                    Not even a single  
                    untroubled hour.

II. I hear greater wretchedness.  
I might leave behind.  
                    This world its miseries.  
No desire to continue. Longer in this  
world. *I do not die.*  
To have survived another day?  
These blossoms also grieve.  
                    *I loved so well.*

III. Long ago we used to . . .  
Morning and night, morning. . .  
                    That he would come to this!  
He suffered a dreadful change.  
                    Passes the wretched days.  
His face and form. Beauty compared  
to spring. Ebbing away  
                    beneath empty waves.  
The sea by Holy Kumano.

He cast himself forever.  
Try gathering like seaweed.  
Tangled strands of my thoughts.  
Drifting in his sea-stained hair.

IV. The present world the same.  
As the one before. Though it holds  
no place for me.

These fresh anxieties, what?  
What do they bring?  
Plunge me in deeper grief.  
Shut off my thoughts.

Cut myself from past.  
*Yet.* Longings, memories flooding  
back. After all, after all.  
No more can notice. Love others  
hold for me.

No more *should* notice.  
I can't, I can't . . .

V. Holds no place for me.  
I am held fast. This misery be  
mine. Ordinary bereavements  
are pitiable. Can they  
know such nightmares?  
Summer cicadas screaming,  
sighing. Keening mingles with  
mine. Do you too grieve?

VI. My body wanders forth,  
unthinking, following my heart . . .  
Memories keep me here.  
Dew has vanished. This garden

falls ruined. Like he fell  
ruined. A wild heath bearing.  
No trace its former beauty.

VII. Tears fall like dew. I survive  
until spring. I come again, alone.  
Yet nothing is certain.

Who has suffered as I?  
Is this a dream? Was our past dream?  
I am at a loss.

This is reality?  
Moon above the clouds. Resting  
on this mountain. Even her radiance  
touched with sadness.  
Our tears fall like dew.

VIII. My sojourn in worlds.  
The road of my return.  
Lies ever open before me.  
To follow at my will.  
Yet beginnings of journeys.  
Are always profoundly moving.  
Remember one  
reluctantly leaving.  
How much greater her sorrows.  
I will be a fugitive dwelling. Who  
vanished like melting snows.

IX. Does the fragrance still linger?  
Of those sleeves of long ago?  
World of old never comes.  
Not again, they say.  
Making events long passed. Grow all

the more affecting.

Lost in thought I. My spirit floating  
aimlessly. I gaze the sky. In all directions  
without end. Clouds stretch on, on . . .

X. It is upon the moon that so often  
I have gazed enraptured . . . I have come  
to understand . . . last profound beauty  
of a starlit sky . . . no way to melt my  
ice frozen tear-stained sleeves . . .  
no memories remain for me . . .  
by the sea of Omi were I able to meet  
my love, one whom I long for,  
gladly would I spend lifetimes  
mingling with these wild waves.

Part III.

The Poems of Eric  
Mackay Yeoman





ROSALIE (From Eric Mackay  
Yeoman, 1885-1909.)

I. Rude monuments chaos, amethyst snowy  
streams, foaming liquors roar to gaping  
caverns, pour to verdant  
plains. In pearly mist.

---

This is my universe and  
my frail heart its centre.

Ghostly morn-mists  
flee chartless, pursuing wraiths of reality,  
a luring void.

Kingdoms of wan flowers  
against creeping shadows' stealth.  
Violet hues burst. Violent gold chased lost  
forms. Cold-plundered Earth.

II. Winged things' harmonies, haunts  
of stately wold. Simple heaven descends.  
I commune with miseries.

Spring's straying sickens me, my  
senses to a narcotic chaos. Despair.

A withered thing  
by sorrow's frost.

III. From bright palaces beyond, quiet splendour spread. Far from stations in dusky sky.

A seraph band of friends she lost.

Mourned.

Snowy angels haunt  
crimson halls, lingering  
from their lands  
of long delight. Rapturing the world  
entrancing flowers.  
Sprang like lips all ruby-dye.

IV. Fade. So, fade wan flowers in dusk cold  
shades. The world was fair in perished hours.  
Some were stolen by angels gathering  
for their paradise.

Some we nourished.  
No more to shine upon  
our voided eyes. Faint  
frail flowers are night-wind's prey. Grace rich  
bournes. All your soft delight.

V. Warlike glory gleams, last red embers die.  
A mist lies on twilight seas.  
Bridge of dreams comes visions.

We see joy of other days. Sorrows  
are past. Shapes out the best, at last.

Wandered sadly by  
a shadowed sea. Darkness triumphed.  
Soul was kinsman to sleeping night.

VI. Painted flower seas. Lakes like mirrors.  
Wandered where beauty lies. Did angels

hear moaning of the skies? Troubled

spheres. Flickering planets flare  
and dying suns emit their pallid glare.

Mists enshroud, mock.  
Rumbling space forth-vomits. Worlds that  
blare. Roar stagnant gulfs. Shrieking  
whirlwinds their hideous flight.

VII. Bursting suns impel their crystal blaze  
and snowy flames into cosmic  
haze above zones

where painting lightning cast  
gorgeous flames in vast displays  
beyond where young  
suns hold their sways, while worlds swirl  
round. Drink of virgin light.

VIII. Eyes are closed to Earth's harsh tragedy.  
Cold-plundered Earth. Violent gold chased  
lost forms. Violet hues burst.  
Kingdoms of wan flowers

against creeping shadows'  
stealth. Ghostly morn-mists  
flee chartless, pursuing  
wraiths of reality, a luring void. This is my  
universe and my frail heart its centre.  
In pearly mist.

Rude monuments chaos, amethyst snowy

streams, foaming liquors roar to gaping  
caverns, pour to verdant plains.

Fate called child away, and she gone  
into peopled skies, home with her spirit's kin  
kept hidden from her trustful eyes.  
Eyes are closed to Earth's harsh tragedy.  
And mine.

Part IV.

The Poems of  
Connie Dykeman



## LIFE

Don't think of life as a long golden  
road with never a hill or a bend or never  
a stone on which to stumble or never a  
rut to mend.

Or with beautiful shade  
trees arched overhead flawless and straight  
and tall and with joyous sunbeams  
shining to gleam on a jewelled wall.

Or just a place where cares are  
unknown and toil is trampled for pleasure  
and your thoughts are free for you alone  
and actions are measure for measure.

For there are many and  
many a hill to climb and many a bend to take  
and stumbles you'll never be able to count  
though many amends you'll make.

And many a tree will fall across the path  
you have sought to trod but push along as  
best you may and see the hand of God.

And along the road, there'll be  
no wall to keep the way straight for you but  
many and many a break there'll  
be other roads to be trodden too.

And you'll find there are many tasks to be  
done though weary you may be but look  
ahead with courage stout and true and  
this is what you'll see.

On a glorious portal of

precious gold written in letters the best  
**"I forgive your mistakes, come unto  
me, and I will give you rest."**

## REMEMBRANCE

Those brave boys sailed across the  
ocean blue  
only to meet another ocean, red;  
left their warm places of repose  
to rest forever in an earthen bed.

They left their mothers for a fighting  
thrill  
to save their country with no  
thought of death,  
fighting so bravely until they  
wounded fell,  
a prayer for mother and a farewell  
breath.

Every night beside the empty cot  
mother was praying for her pride  
and joy.  
Would he return? or was he then at  
rest?  
May Mother meet in heaven with  
her boy.

Knowing not where their young  
young bodies rest,  
flowers are laid beside the  
monument



given by everybody, young and old,  
but the most beautiful are those  
which mother sent.

## THE ANTLERED MONARCH

The antlered monarch softly  
moves towards the woodland  
pool, his thirst to quench,

but little does he think or  
knows that very soon his blood  
will drench the verdant moss  
about his hooves.

After careful aim at that hand  
some head a loud report rings  
through the wood,

the noble brute lies on the self  
same spot where a moment  
before he so gracefully stood.

The antlered  
monarch is sorely dead.

## TO A MOTH

Escape rare bird of night where  
yet you may, escape 'ere comes  
the glaring

light of day  
when greedy seeker ever long  
to find a moth whose beauty

is akin to thine. Oh, piece of  
gossamer, gold, black and white  
fly safely by Diana's mellow light.

## KILLING

If people kill the animals  
just for the sport of killing  
some humans should be  
    butchered off,  
if the government is willing.

Part V.  
The Poems of  
cgnastrand



## THE BLACK JUNGLES

Black jungles glisten. On crimson  
world. Gardens of scarlet. For  
scarlet kings. On thrones  
scarlet diseased. Single grey shadow  
of bronze. Unseen by them.

Wasp-like iridescent kings.  
Watching as the sky bleeds.  
And world dissolves away. Spider  
webs glisten. The prey released.

Suddenly all have wings.  
Gardens are empty. Childhood has  
ended. Stars but glisten.

Worlds but sing. Kings become  
chrysalis. Awakened in  
birth. Scatter themselves forever.

Leave their children. Far  
behind them. Amid black  
gardens. Imprisoned as amber.  
Imprisons a wasp. As all begins anew.  
Creation revolves about. Itself again.

THE PEOPLE (Inspired by the  
writings of Georg Heym.)

Great fires they sweep into night.  
Suicides walk abroad these times.  
The streets are littered with corpses  
like broken moths.

Night holds  
her dominion  
dying here.

The people  
watch the ships rotting along the  
ocean's road. They stop. They stare.  
They do not scream.  
The city roars like a beast in heat.  
Aslant the shadows watch as  
we make love.

Upon the  
great ocean  
of thorns

the hordes of  
suicides recline, lusting after wounds  
that will not heal. The selves now  
lost they will not come  
again. The dead awake and pluck  
from their eyes a leaden sleep, of the  
dreams they had  
when they were alive.

## THRAGO

Like all villains it is  
the flair of genius which  
liberates him.

It is not enough  
to murder the prince  
in his bed but to lay upon  
the dead man's body  
and kiss him tenderly  
in death, to leave  
a lasting impression  
upon his spirit.

It is not enough to  
rape a woman but to blind  
her and take away her tongue  
and hands and feet,  
and leave her in a place  
where not even the beasts  
will have pity.

## EMBRACE THE WILLOW

Embrace the willow tracing  
her hands along the ground and lays  
her breasts along the river's  
lips, to suckle and be suckled on.

Embrace the fears that cling  
and trace their lines along your mouth,  
they too shall pass as you  
feast upon your fears and devour them  
to unbeing, by the willow and her  
lustful river son, shaded by her  
over-ripened breasts.

## MY PROSTITUTE

I have a prostitute I like.  
Her dinner conversation  
fascinates me, her discussions  
on Zuk and Nietzsche reveal  
a well-trained mind,  
perhaps a lawyer in a previous life.

I come just to sit  
and hear her talk. I've drawn her  
picture in my heart. I know of men  
who spit in the face of art.



## SAND

I.       The mountain's mouth is  
quietly cold. Inside lay white  
          sand and shriveled soldiers  
lie. What cruel flower there follows  
          black wasps decayed?  
Under what savoured sky?

II.       My enemy I buried upon  
the isle. In the land of her fathers  
I placed her,  
          as a lover would.  
What greater gift to she who  
made me then place her lovingly  
          in her father's tomb  
and lay her who made me gently  
down by the mountain's  
mouth beside cruel flowers  
          where the black wasps  
decayed, though she is my hated  
enemy, as a lover would?

## A DARK KING

*He would sooner  
the grass has his wealth  
than*

*his sons live their  
lives in his shadow.*

In court, a dark king sits and  
with his eyes regards each  
shadow as it flits like ghosts  
                                across the floor.

With voice outstretched he calls  
each by name before cursing  
them with an executioner's voice.

In this court which the sun will  
never see only a dark king recalls  
                                echoes of them who  
walked like gods once proud  
then afraid, rendered now to ghosts  
                                in a court of dead names.

## ST. ROSALIA

I left her roses once,  
wondering why.

                                I thought about her, Rosalia,  
empty thoughts in empty rooms,  
                                wasteful really.

                                You can't buy women  
with roses, and I have no love  
                                to bribe them with. I have no love at all.

## AMOROUS

Amorous green centaur,  
oak-skinned, slowly turning  
into sand, into shoreline.

He becomes the body of a  
beach, still green, each  
grain emerald, and one

hears the thunder of his steps  
upon himself, while the sky  
hangs above, herself impotent  
to his will.

## MEDUSA IN LOVE

Medusa's hair is softly red,  
crimson black like tallowed wicks  
of candles,  
blood dark with absinthe

or opium's skin leaving 'pon  
all who gaze at her  
a little delirium poured  
upon them, until drunk of eyes  
or senses dulled they

grow to statues but not  
of stone; languid they lie  
unmoving from  
the spot where they were touched  
by a goddess walking with

the shadows in her step.

## MEDUSA CUTS HER SERPENT HAIR

Medusa cuts her serpent hair  
and with an acid peels away  
the scales from off her face

till she looks like any woman I  
have seen, trying so desperately  
to be what she can never be,

lovely and beautiful even with  
her scales and her serpent hair.

## AUTUMN

I imagined one cold night  
the country of autumn was  
same as the country of steel,  
    trees hardened as girders,  
leaves cut deep as  
wires on flesh,  
    and sometimes,  
*sometimes*, dead machines  
screamed in the middle  
of the night like living men.

## SMALL BLACK WOMB

Life is a small black  
womb, like a man in a little  
glass jar in a little glass jar.

Life is a door like a war  
at Willow's Square,  
each murdered there  
standing still not knowing  
why they stand.

Such are lives  
condemned upon the air  
by the princes of sleep,  
we the prisoners  
of two worlds.

## HADES

On the dead world, I was the last  
of men, by pillars of stone left by my kin,  
before the end.

Only Hades was with me, only the  
ghost of the god who is dead waiting with me until  
the time when I would be taken

to see all those he had carried before

and after all that,

after the end, he'd fade away  
like other men, with no task to save him or thought  
to redeem him. From death he had life  
and with death he will end.

## BASILISK

Spiderlings, silver threads dangling  
like an inverted cathedral in miniature  
from out my giant's hand.

Of me  
what do they think of, those glass-bodied  
children of an absent mother? To them  
I am a basilisk, I would turn

their glass bodies to stone, rupture  
them as scales along cement, break their  
jewel eyes into jagged spires of bone.  
If they think

of me at all they might  
think of me as that, or perhaps nothing  
but the ground they walk and crawl upon,

with the sun a lamp overhead,  
and night nothing but me turning off the  
lamp, and finally going indoors.

## IN MOUNTAINS

In mountains, in rivers resting  
silently there

lay the land of the  
one night stand.

Each man is like the moon  
with two faces, one side  
always being shown.

The hawk and the jaguar  
are there where  
I was born in the red grass again.

## THE BOTTLE DRAGON

Snake god's requiem, the bottle dragon  
lying there like a tear cut across  
a drunk's sad lips and it seems

as if the serpent god is also drunk  
a little bit, lying down  
with the bottle dragon coming near

until he can't escape the blood-drenched  
tear his own self he makes into.

## ELECTRIC BABYLON

Hoping for more, expecting less  
electric Babylon reclines on the Serpent Nile  
where twisted minds have a twisted rest

and hanging gardens bear the weight  
of gods they've made out of deserted subway  
stations, graffiti and the silence it brings,

out of the godless summer queen  
and the puritanical winter king crucified  
for looking on her loveliness as electric

Babylon moans a little between its  
sighs, for between a woman's sweating thighs  
hell and heaven come together, hell and heaven  
are everywhere on the Serpent Nile.

## THE PERSONIFICATION OF SAND

The personification of sand loved unwisely  
and unwell, the living doll some kind of angel  
with the old woman in the woods,  
the sibyl spreads beneath, the charbaby burns.



## THE WHORE-FROST

We are shades and shadows,  
the whore-frost our mother;

between sweating thighs  
we hold communion in  
graces she brings, as moans  
become our hymns,  
our native tongue,

oh, mother of all sins we  
reach to you to come to us  
at last;

there is a burial  
innocence in the cold  
a shadow feels, a hunger  
untouched which clothes  
a naked shade.

We love you as we come for  
you. Reach out to us, come for us.  
Communion awaits.



Part VI.

The Poems of  
Gadianton



## ULEXITE

Ulexite

                  clear  
eyes, yours,  
hers,  
soft as vinegar,  
quick as sand,  
                  me  
between, hunted  
gaze, haunted,  
yourselves  
archers.

## ACACALLIS

Sister of

                  a minotaur,  
her name was.  
Find in burial plots  
women like her,  
                  with brothers  
too cursed to stain earth  
by being laid rest,  
                  instead their  
graves unfound are.  
Only record of them  
                  are the loved ones  
whose lives the worst of  
                                  were.

## THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF EDGAR PEACOCK

Find in old death notices  
lives caught 'tween embryo  
and breathing.

Here is one. Edgar  
Peacock, stillborn. Can't  
tell who he might have been.

Imagine all the places  
and days allotted him,  
extinguished.

There are more lives unsaid  
than all the grains of stars  
burning, grinding in the dark.

## THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ELIZA SELDOM

Old dead leaves  
stain in passing.

Decade is not time,  
it is country.

What she saw, who  
she was, can a year tell,  
can years give witness?

Every old person  
looks the same to  
everyone younger  
than themselves.

## MALCOLM FIVEFIELD FRIARS

He took wing  
one day in spring before  
the ravens feasted,  
and tasting mead  
and honeyseed  
Friars rested,  
beside the grave  
his children made  
of all that he had left them.

## MOTH SONG

She is a moth  
that never sings  
since she has no tongue  
nor voice but in my dreams  
she can, just as in my  
dreams the one I love  
loves me.

## AB KIN XOX

Lord of verse,  
lord of words,  
invoked in body of  
hummingbird,  
flashing scarlet  
as a sword, who has not  
heard, who has he not  
heard?

## THE BALLAD OF CHYARA BYARD

Chyara Byard slender as a  
twig in November,  
green as summer is  
remembered, not human child,  
alraune perhaps,  
seed of mandrake blood  
and hanged man's seed.

You'd find her seducing  
boys and men who'd never  
come back, taken by elegant  
hand to the forest where  
ever leaf is her, every twig  
her fingers.

Every root is her eye.  
Delicate duelist with blade  
of thorn met her end in fire  
and storm

when the forest burnt  
down from the thunder sound  
and she was torched miles  
from there,

in sympathy with  
the ground of her burial birth.



Part VII.

The Poems of  
Kanada Hito Karasu



HAIKU OF A KANADA  
HITO KARASU

1) Spider on thread  
silver descends, homages  
corpses made of lead.

2) Wolf's own shadow  
knows not colour of  
wolf's own skin.

3) Sunlight pours  
against face of the rose  
as she is cut and bled,  
laid to rest upon  
small child's hand.

4) In the crowd  
your face; mist  
on raindrops.

5) Then she is one,  
she is lonely  
and done of life  
retreats; stone.

6) Blue spider road  
and all loaded  
down toad and frog  
slowed; spider  
fed.

7) Snow on poplars  
and when far from  
you, stars are dead.

8) Cigar smoke and  
one bleak land of  
broken-handed trees.

9) Never does the hound betray  
the pack of foxes.

10) The sickle strikes  
the wheat  
and an ant is slain.

11) The bones of the grass  
are set  
till the wind cries.

12) A leaf owes no allegiance  
to the man who frees it  
from the branch.

13) A frog swallows the moon  
reflected in a pond of water.

14) A stone tortoise  
falls into a garden pool.  
Only his owner complains.

15) Single pebble stumbles  
from hills, leads in ranks his  
brothers to the valley.

16) A child reaches  
for the bright flower,  
a scorpion's tail.

17) In the box  
a shadow hides  
an unlit candle.

18) The cricket drinks at  
the tea before the fool  
throws out the cup.

19) The girl unrobes  
herself amid the crowd  
of snowdrops.

20) In the cup of a friend  
a cricket doesn't notice  
if the tea is good.

21) Twilight and the grasses  
all become small children's hands.

22) To love a wolf  
is not to go unarmed.

23) Jealous he watches  
even his wife's reflection  
suspiciously.

24) How sad when the worm  
is caught  
and the sparrow is still hungry.

25) The horse to  
battle pants  
and on the field rests.

26) Drunk on life's pleasures  
girl forgets snow clinging  
about her naked feet

27) The violet shakes her  
head at me scornfully  
as I paint her.

28) Carved on the bones  
of a bear, I wrote  
one poem upon another.

29) The piper plays his softest tune  
and still, the ravens glisten on the grass.

30) The wall leans  
lazily against the  
cloud of ashes.

31) Dog at mute  
attention, sparrow  
on the grass.

32) Toad bloated,  
oak splintered, winter  
bled to spring.

33) A crime has been committed  
on the fly; my child's hands are stained  
with ice-coloured wings.

34) Butterfly do  
not leave, go with  
me, go with me;  
    know my love.

35) Ripen in the  
sun, so she said  
or he said to  
    her; lonely.

36) Little child go  
with me, do not  
follow laughter,  
    or black snow.

37) I have conquered the sun  
from shining! I have plucked  
out my eyes!

38) I am the sea; light  
pours down my back; sun  
roars in my face.

39) Penning drunken lines  
with hot milkweed wine  
the poet forgets the sky  
    so let us escape you  
    and I. Who will care  
        if we are gone?

#### 40) Epilogue: The Last City

I walked in the last city of man  
and found no tears of joy stained  
our souls or eyes.

I left the last city of man bitterly  
for all the men were shadows  
there and all the women shades.

*In last city of man  
lay delicate things:*

*black rose petals  
scattered 'pon*

*crumbling crystal  
books of the dying.*